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GIFT OF
Author

985
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Songs
and
Poems
Karl Führman
B.C.
1922

CALIFORNIA

To one who knows me
and yet loves me

Copyright 1922
Karl Fuhrman

PS3511
445
56

Printed for my dear friends of the

Bohemian Club

San Francisco

1922

Written in a few hours of leisure
borrowed from many years of labor

KARL FÜHRMAN

It's damtuff work to write good verse
And printing it won't fill my purse;
But poetizing is disease
That only printer's ink can ease.

S.F. Jan 25-25

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UNIV. OF
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FOREWORD

I take of my own wherever I find it;
Much is from life and little from books.
I choose and reject and select and grind it,
Then give it new birth, and if one deeply looks
He may find that its bones are as old as the Nile,
And yet, if it's clothed in an up-to-date style
And a thought that is worth while's behind it
What matters is source or age: You won't mind it.
For ev'ry good thought has been thought of before;
But here, dear Bohemian, we are at the door.

574389

SEEK

All men and things have good and bad
As their component elements
And beauty unalloyed or truth
Without admixture of the false,
Are phantoms and elusive dreams.
And yet the chaos that obscures
The good, the true, the beautiful
Will melt before true wisdom's eye:

Let thine imagery supply
Yon Grecian marble's hidden line:
The jealous fingers of the vine
Hide only from the dullard's view.
Yon forest's black and bodeful mass
Portents but darkness and decay:
Yet, fear not; brave the quaking bog
That intervenes and thou art come
Where violets bloom and lilies float
And nightingale to nightingale
Sings dulcet, wooing lays.

A potent truth is often hid
Within a tome of platitudes
Go: find the beautiful, reveal
The good, where these to shallow eyes
Are lost: that is indeed a task
To fill the noblest, highest life.

By long and patient search for truth
Shall wisdom cull that which is good
From old and new philosophy;
And then with impulse new and strong
The world on eager wings shall rise
Tow'rd reason, liberty and light!

TO JACQUELINE

You fear eternal flame and sin you shun,
When I suggest one little hour of love,
Because no priestly word has made us one.

But recently the priest was reading mass
In Latin—and you could not understand—
But I have studied in a Latin class.

He said: "O pious Christians; this say I:
You surely shall for ev'ry unkissed kiss,
One hundred years in hell's fierce fire fry!"

TO PLEASURE

Oh those who never raised the sparkling glass
At midnight's happy, care-free hour,
And whom no maid with dark, seductive eyes
Has tempted to some hidden bower;

Who ne'er forgot the old world's serious sham,
And feared its pleasures to explore,
How wise are they, how virtuous, and yet
No words can say how I abhor!

All in this world one learns to bear
Except that ev'ry day be fair.

* * * *

Write down bravely what you think:
Put no water in your ink!

* * * *

Daily hear a little song,
Read some poet's exalting verse,
Look upon a work of art;
These refresh your soul and heart;
You have wealth tho' empty purse.

* * * *

Would you estimate your value?
Contemplate no more, but act;
Face your duty's trying stress:
You shall know if you possess
Pow'r, ability and tact.

* * * *

Man's not here to solve the problem
Of the world, but he should find
Where the problem *does* begin;
That done, let him keep within
Bounds that circumscribe the mind.

* * * *

Tread the path of *pious truth*
Always and where'er you go;
Thus your destiny command.
Pious sham lets falsehood stand
Therefore I do loathe it so!

* * * *

While your pocket's buttoned tightly
Kindness tow'rd you can not live;
Open heart and hand to others
You shall find all men are brothers;
But to take, you first must give.

* * * *

Is your head and heart a-whirling?
Then, indeed, you know the best;
For if love no longer thrills you,
Nor with woe an error fills you,
You would best be laid to rest.

* * * *

Work is hard and labor bitter
When it gives another pelf;
But it is akin to pleasure
When through work you help yourself.

THE MARQUIS de.....

Hold my horse, one of you loafers there;
Get my sword one of you lazy louts:
In a boudoir I left it, hereabouts,
The lady does not need it; and why stare,
You brazen scoundrel? Lose a falcon's line
His flight I'll follow into heaven's blue,
So I may think and plan a conquest new;
Nor dare disturb me, any of you swine!

ARMAGEDDON

I am all from life's beginning,
Dormant in the ancient sea,
To the master of the planet,
Claiming Godly pedigree.

All the mystic, living forces
Move me with resistless surge;
Source and goal forever hidden,
Plaything of the cosmic urge.

Through laborious, countless eons
I have struggled from the soil,
Brother of the worm and eagle,
Child of Nature's endless toil.

In me blend the fear and cunning
Of the timid, hunted hare
With the tiger's savage courage
Stalking, hungry, from his lair.

I am vice and I am virtue,
I am love and I am hate,
I am kind and I am cruel,
I destroy and I create.

I am Brahma, I am Buddha
I am Moses, I am Christ;
I shall hang at dawn, a murderer,
Brooding, in a cell, despised!

I am tyrant over millions,
Pow'r of wealth my very God;
I'm an old and tattered beggar
Whom the pangs of hunger prod.

I kill pallid, little children.
In my mines and in my mills;
I am shocked and feel compassion
When my tread an earth-worm kills.

I am Alfred, I am Ivan,
I am just and I'm a knave;
I am Lincoln, I am Nero,
I set free and I enslave.

I face God at dawn, rejoicing,
On a sun-kissed, wind-swept hill;
Errant, in the slums at midnight,
I seek pangs of lust to still.

Thus am I that great Arena
Where a Saint and Demon fight;
One for dark and loathsome bondage,
One for liberty and light.

When, at last, the Victor rises
Bloody, dazed, but Victor still,
He shall prove my soul's Saint Michael,
My unconquerable will!

ORGY

(Rondeau)

Let Venus reign this rapturous night,
And every veil of modesty be rent.
An hour ago, and you were prudish, quite:
Now in your breast a raging fire is pent.

Blush not for nudity: you should resent
That such a form was ever hid from light.
Venus shall reign this rapturous night
And every veil of modesty be rent.

First, drinking in your lines, I fed my sight,
Now passion's fury finds an eager vent:
And at our feet sits Cupid, happy sprite,
With useless bow, for every arrow's spent,
And Venus reigns this rapturous night.

ABENDROT

Mich umtoset
Tolles Leben,
Bunter Schaum der argen Welt.

And'rer Habgier
Neid und Selbstsucht
Hat das Leben mir vergällt.

Blasse Wangen,
Heisze Tränen,
Sehnsuchtsschmerzen—Abendrot:

Schon erstarrt mein
Müdes Herze:
Komm' herbei—erlös' mich, Tod!

LYRICAL INTERLUDE

(ELEVEN SONGS)

1

MY SECRET

I had a secret none should know,
I never would reveal it;
'Twas just between my love and me,
No one, I thought, would steal it.

But as I strolled in ecstasy
Through fields of blooming clover
I could no more contain myself
And hummed it o'er and over.

Then came a busy tell-tale bee,
Heard me and told the willow;
The willow leaning o'er the brook
Then told a passing billow.

The billow hurried on and told
The mighty river flowing,
The river took it to the sea,
The sea told all winds blowing.

So all the world our secret knows,
A secret now no longer;
But why should we care, she and I;
It makes our love the stronger.

For love is not a thing for two,
Tho' two may well begin it;
Unless it take in all the world,
Believe, there's nothing in it!

2

CONSOLATIONS

I know, dear love, I shall not see again
The radiant vision that was you,
Yet when I seek the mem'ry haunted lane,
When silver moonbeams filter through,
I see your smile of yore, I see your smile!

I know, dear love, I shall not hear again
The mellow music of your voice,
Yet when I stray where breezes wave the grain,
And larks in azure skies rejoice,
I hear your song of yore, I hear your song!

3

To C. N. D.

OUR PARADISE

O, weary world, in darkest hours despairing,
  See you no star that beckons from above?
See you no hand that for the least is caring,
  Feel you no Pow'r whose wondrous name is Love?
Cast off the chains that in low bondage hold you,
  Into the light of God's great love arise;
O, Love Divine, flood ev'ry heart that's beating,
  Then 'here and now' shall be our Paradise!

O, blessed hour, that taught us that in giving
  There is a joy transcending all we know;
And that our lives are truly worth the living,
  If willing hands the seeds of kindness sow.
May ev'ry heart whose faith has won the vict'ry
  Send this fond pray'r to Him who holds the skies:
O, Love Divine, bring light to hearts in darkness
  Then 'here and now' shall be our Paradise!

4

To Rosemary

FOR YOU AND ME

I know a bank where daisies blow
For you and me;
Where dreaming under shady trees
I've seen cloud shadows o'er the leas
Go sailing in the summer breeze:
I know a bank where daisies blow
For you and me.

I know a cot with roses crowned
For you and me:
Where naught is lacking, love, believe,
But your sweet presence to relieve
My longing heart that else shall grieve:
I know a cot with roses crowned
For you and me.

I know a Kirkyard on the hill
For you and me;
Where all the winds of heaven sweep;
How sweet, oh dearest, there to sleep,
Our souls, at last, in God's own keep:
I know a Kirkyard on the hill
For you and me.

5

WISHES

Oh, that I were the summer breeze
That lingers in your tresses,
And steals a kiss from your red lips,
And you soft cheek caresses.

Oh, that I were the sunbeam bright
That floods the path you're treading;
I yearn to be the happy tree
That shades o'er you is spreading.

But most I envy one red rose
That on your breast is lying,
And while its fragrance fills the air,
For you is gladly dying!

6

ONE FLEETING HOUR

When the twilight of eve dims the sun's last ray
And the shadows of night gather fast,
There is one fleeting hour that I've prayed would stay,
Full of joy and of pain that's passed.
And perhaps you may know of its wondrous spell,
Its smiles and its bitter tears;
And emotions arise that no words can tell
As you look back o'er the years.

But that one fleeting hour with its dream is gone
And the mists of the night slowly rise;
Then 'tis well to forget and go bravely on
With a smile spite of tear-dimmed eyes.
For one fleeting hour can make you strong
If you will but heed its call;
And then every day shall be one glad song
Full of love that conquers all.

7

TWO SEASONS

Gray are the skies o'er the wind-swept hill,
The snow-covered valley below lies still,
The chill brook is crawling neath icy sheen,
And stark branches quiver where leaves were green.
So, too, in my heart all is cold and drear
Since that bitter hour when you left me, Dear!

But neath the coverlet of the snow
The magical spring bids the violets grow,
And soon sunny skies and a balmy breeze
Shall shower with blossoms the fields and trees.
So, too, shall my heart be aglow with cheer
When you come again to be near me, Dear!

8

"IT IS FOR YOU"

It is for you that dawn awakes the flowers
Their sweetest fragrance to exhale;
It is for you the songbirds in the bowers
Sing songs of love on hill and vale;
And when the sun, in ardent splendor wooing,
In happy spring his promises renewing,
On all the fields the blossoms fair is strewing,
It is for you; it is for you!

It is for you that countless stars are gleaming
Within the vaulted, deep, blue skies;
It is for you that night comes with its dreaming,
When love sends longing winged on sighs;
And when the moon impelled by fond emotion,
Eager to prove his ardor and devotion
Transmutes to silver all the boundless ocean,
It is for you; it is for you!

9

To Rosemary

I'M A-LONGIN' DEAR, FO' YOU

Ever since you went away,
Ever since dat dreary day,
I ain't had no happiness
Nothin' can't go right, I guess;
Always I'm a-feelin' blue.
I'm a-longin', dear fo' you.

All de day I watch de road,
An' de landin' of de boat,
An' at night I put de light
By de window fo' your guide;
Honey, if you only knew
How I'm longin' Dear, fo' you.

If I knew you'd come no mo',
What should I be livin' fo';
But I pray fo' you an' den
Some day you'll come back again;
You'll be wantin' love dat's true
An' I'm longin' Dear, fo' you.

10

THE SONG OF LOVE

Many a heart in silence holds
A love that's true and deep,
As in a lute the harmonies
Of unsung music sleep.

Until, at last, across the strings
A wooing hand shall glide,
Waking dormant melodies,
Rousing the sleeping tide.

Then rings to heav'n the joyous air
Resounding clear and strong:
It is the old, old melody:
It is the old, old song.

11

TO MY HEART

Though brumal clouds o'ercast the dark'ning sky,
And winter's snowy shroud o'er all is spread,
Do not despair, o heart, the end is nigh:
Spring is not dead, spring is not dead!

Though sorrow's ache is now oppressing you,
Yield up your flood of tears, too long unshed,
Do not despair, o heart: life springs anew,
Love is not dead, Love is not dead!

—End of the Lyrical Interlude—

Nos. 3, 4, 5, 6, 9 and 11 are published with music.

WHAT DO I LIKE?

You ask: "Well, is there anything, old Dear,
In this world that you like?"
You smile—the lurking shadow of a sneer—
And stroke your gray Van Dyke.
Dear Doc, there still are things I like, but most
A walk through fog at night,
Or, when the sun is bright,
On crag and hill, on dazzling sea and shore.
Spring orchards all a-bloom;
The gulls that rise and soar,
The grove's mysterious gloom
At night, when the last reveler is still,
And, oh, gross appetite.
Rye bread and butter-gastronomic thrill!
The dazzling, satin white
Of arms and shoulders moulded "after Haig"
The Caveman, or a Keith.
A chocolate malted milk—therein an egg
Lips that love-secrets breathe,
Nor heed the passing of the star-lit hours
The west-wind in the pines;
A field a-bloom with glowing, scarlet flow'rs,
The fruit of sunkissed vines.
Bulotti's songs and at the keyboard "Bob";
Or "Uda" at the keys
When "Rudy" bids his fiddle laugh or sob.
George Sterling's ecstacies.
A Bach Sonata, or a Herbert hit;
The Volstead act repealed.
A dinner seasoned with the rapier wit
Of Thompson or of Field.

A MOTHER TO HER COUNTRY

(1918)

You have given me great honor,
And a service star of gold,
You have called me brave and noble
Thinking thus I'd be consoled.

You shall see I do not hunger
And give me a place to die,
Yes, to die, for I've ceased living;
But, as men, you're asking why.

Ask a mother to whose bosom
Helpless baby hands have clung;
From whose eyes long years of patience
Tears of pain and joy have wrung!

Ev'ry night my errant spirit
Searches over shell-torn fields
To return at dawn, despondent;
Only tears my seeking yields.

You have given me great honor,
Noble words your message bore:
I am striving to be grateful,
But my boy comes back no more!

WELTSCHMERZ

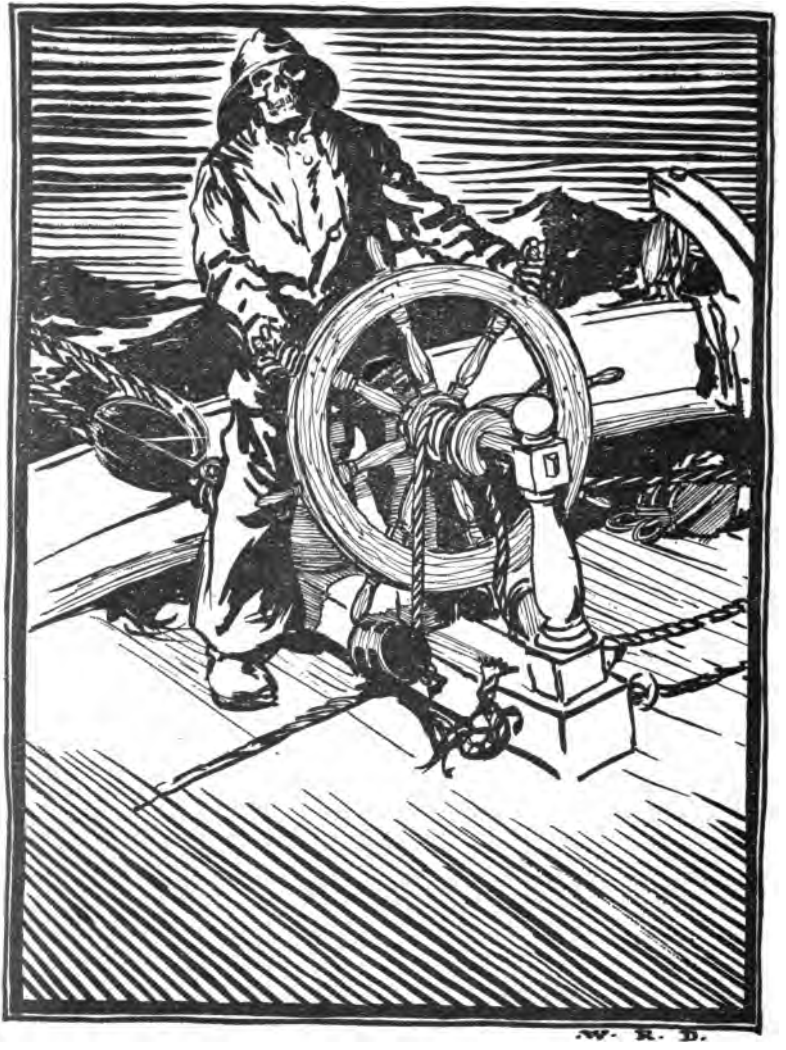
Oh, why and whence, e'en in young, passionate life,
Comes this strange longing for the end of strife;
Comes this dull pain and these unbidden tears,
This yearning that on empty, joyless years
The shroud-like curtain of oblivion fall?

Oh, why and whence this vague yet potent grief:
Is it my soul that's craving for relief,
Is it my soul that's striving thus to say:
"Oh break—ye prison-bars of flesh—away;
From o'er the mountain-crests I hear a call!"

To W. J. P.

"CHATEAU THIERRY"

"Is it you, old pal? they got me—
Take my hand—I'm going west;
But, by God, there's four goes with me,
Four to one, I call some test!
See that kid there, he was easy;
Why, it almost seemed a shame;
Just a youngster, pale and slender
But I must say he was game.
Then two more came on together,
Just had time to flash my 'gat';
You have seen me poppin' rattlers:
Hell! I had 'em sprawlin' flat.
Then that bearded beast came at me;
Not a pill was in my gun,
So I rams him with my sticker,
Went clean through him on the run;
But the blade caught in his buckle
Some damn way—it sure was hell!
While I yanked and cussed I got it,
Here, below the heart, and fell.
Did they get you too, ol' buddy?
No; then my blood's on your hand—
Looks to me it's getting misty
Over where those poplars stand;
See, it's shutting all around us,
Gee, ol' pal, I'm getting cold;
But the pain is gone, thank heaven;
Look, the sun breaks through like gold!
When you get a chance to do it,
Write the folks I did my best;
Break it easy to my mother;
Good-bye, pal, I'm going West.


W. R. B.

To W. E. D.

THE SHIP

The ship glideth on o'er the foam-crested sea,
From serfdom's dark shores tow'rd a land of the Free.

From mast and from hold there resoundeth a cheer:
"Our goal! just ahead! there is liberty here!"

The helmsman, sinister, saith: "naught shall avail,
Ye still shall be slaves: in a circle we sail!"

To E. F. S.

BEYOND

Oft in the silent watches of the night
Some strange and mystic power wakes me,
Bearing me off, as some great Condor might,
Far from terrestial regions takes me.
Yet what I know and see and feel and hear
In that strange realm that lies I know not where
Still baffles all my tortured thinking here:
Strive as I will: my memory is bare!
And yet I know in some sub-conscious way,
That all the terrors of this nightmare life
Where greed and lust and selfishness hold sway,
Where hate kills love and millions bleed in strife,
Are but a reel of shadows that is thrown
Upon the screen by some foul fiend of hell;
And we shall rise one day to claim our own:
That other realm of light where all is well;
That other realm that oft my spirit finds
When in the silent watches of the night
Some strange and mystic power wakes me.

To T. V.

SODOM

In die engen, dunkeln Gassen,
Wo die roten Lichter glühen,
Schleichen mit gedämpften Tritten
Menschen die die Tugend hassen

Durch die Fenster durch die Türen
Summt ein höllisches gefüster;
Weiber, tote, ohne Seelen,
Suchen Seelen zu verführen.

Falsche Liebesworte sterben
Auf den falschen roten Lippen;
Wo die Unschuld einst gewohnet
Nisten jetzt der Hölle Erben.

Aus den engen, dunkeln Gassen,
Wo die roten Lichter glühen,
Schleichen mit gedämpften Tritten
Menschen die sich selber hassen!

To F. A. D.

HIS WOMAN

They sent him down for twenty years:
Damn that old judge to hell!
For twenty long and weary years
To wither in a cell!

He never will come out alive:
They say that prisons kill;
Oh, God! I wish that I were dead,
Or there with him, poor Bill!

'Twas just three months ago to-night
He rushed into my room,
With something half-hid in his hand
That sparkled in the gloom.

'Here's something, Flo, to match your eyes,'
He said, 'it's from a guy
That wanted money for a drink';
I knew that was a lie!

They took him from my arms that night,
He knew the jig was up;
And one big copper beat him so;
Some day I'll fix that pup!

I can't go to the dance-hall now,
For that's no place for tears;
And Bill's old sweetheart, she's there too:
I couldn't stand her jeers!

God knows what will become of me
And of that little life
That's stirring underneath my heart,
And I ain't even his wife!

Oh, what a lovely "Christian" world
Is this for such as I!
There's nothing left for me to do,
But I'm afraid to die.

Afraid to die because I'd take
I life beside my own
So I'll just try to struggle on
And fight my way alone.

For twenty years! Why not for life?
Or better still, the rope;
This nightmare would be over then
And no such thing as hope.

They sent him down for twenty years
To wither in a cell;
For twenty long and weary years,
Damn that old judge to hell!

THE HUNCHBACK

Sonnet

In thoughtful mood I strolled the village street,
The white-washed cots glared in the summer noon;
By all deserted seemed the place and soon
I came to where the town and country meet;
And there, unmindful of the sultry heat,
A hunch-backed boy stood like a statue hewn
Of stone, before a wall. "Ho! little loon,"
I called, "what do you there?" A smile replete
With joy illumed his face as he replied:
"Oh, see my shadow there, how straight and tall;
Am I not fair as you?" And then with pride
And gloating eyes he gazed, as in a thrall,
Where mocking sun grim nature's fact belied:
Sometime we all thus gaze upon the wall.

THE REBEL PEASANTS

From Bernwards tower the wild bells rang,
In torrents the rain was flowing;
But o'er the storm and bells' hoarse clang
Sounded the old horn's blowing.

The buffalo horn had rested long
Where brave Veit Stoszberg found it,
The old horn roared its battlesong;
No mercy from those who sound it!

No mercy, Knighthood, debonair;
The rebel peasants are rising,
And peasant brawn the score shall square
For centuries of despising.

To castle Klingburg, mute with hate,
They climbed, their fury nursing;
The smith with one blow forced the gate;
Had he not made it, cursing?

A crushing blow the Baron smote,
An ax his sword sent spinning,
A curse died in his bleeding throat;
'Twas now the peasants' inning!

And soon relentless flames arose
Through arches, halls and tower
Beware, oh knights, who dare oppose
The rebel peasants' power!

WOMAN

Oh, woman, you who are God's nearer kin,
Hope of mankind now groping in the gloom.
A bondslave yesterday: to-day abreast
The on and ever upward surging race;
To-morrow destined in your hand to hold
Our fate. God's instrument, you shall redeem
And lift man to your level, half divine,
From whence he, too, may glimpse a paradise
Whose smiling angel messenger you are.
Sweet, radiant, true; victorious through love!

THE GOBLET

She bore a goblet in her hand,
Her step was firm and light,
Nor spilled a drop upon the sand;
And he, a youthful knight,
In amour bright, with skilful hand,
And in a manner careless quite,
Had forced his charger still to stand.

And, yet, when he from her would take
The wine within the goblet light,
His strong, brown hand began to shake,
And hers a-tremble—ah, the plight—
The why and how no one could tell;
But wine was spilled and goblet fell!

I KNOW THEM NOT

I wander through the city and a gray
Fog-veil drifts over the tow'ring piles of steel;
The crowd below impelled by some strange zeal,
And thousands pass: each bent on his own way.

I know them not—and locked within each breast,
Is there a fate resembling mine and bleeds
A wounded heart, perhaps, while no one heeds,
Each one absorbed in his own interest?

The cold fog drips and ever on we go;
From me to you no flash illumes the deep,
And though one called the word the wind would sweep
It on and none can of the other know.

Bohemia's
Midsummer
Grove Book
KARL FURRMAN
Third Year
1923

To one who knows me
and yet loves me

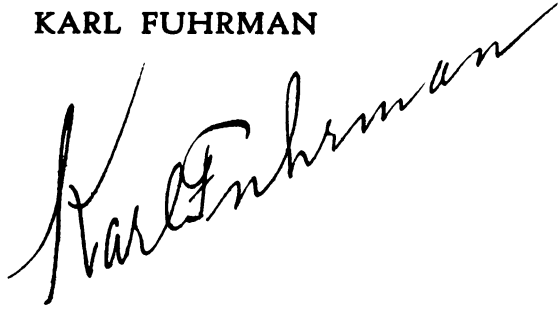
Printed for my dear friends of the

Bohemian Club

San Francisco

1923

KARL FUHRMAN



FOREWORD
to the Third Edition, 1923

It is related in an old legend that although the Priest frowned upon the juggler's performance and ordered him out of the cathedral, the Virgin bent low from her pedestal and touched the juggler's brow.

He had worshiped by doing the only thing he could do well: he had given his best. God saw deeper than the priest.

Here I lay my best upon Bohemia's altar.

Faithfully,

KARL FUHRMAN.

"SPILLING THE BEANS"
(a critico-biographical episode)

Scene: The Club Rooms.

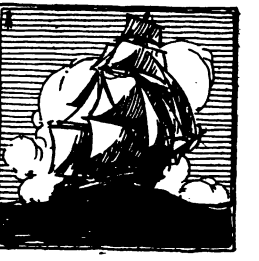
Time: An evening in September, 1923.

Discovered: The Friend, the Professor, the Bon Vivant, the Musician, the Poet, the New Member, the Old Member, the Member who quotes his Wife.

The Old Member: Who's this Fuhrman fellow, anyway? Here's his third yearly contribution and nobody's ever seen him.

The Friend: Oh, he's about on occasions. Most of our musicians know him. Music business, you know—Reece and Fuhrman, Inc.

The Old Member: German? Name sounds like It. Gosh, that's a rotten cigar you gave me, 'Ed.



The Friend: That's why I didn't smoke it, but I'll try to recall what he told me of himself. His great grandfather served under Napoleon from 1806-1810. His grandfather was exiled from Germany in 1848—you remember that revolution that didn't get far, but which gave us some of the best men and citizens we've had from abroad. So the family came to America, but a pardon

was granted these political offenders and ten years later the family returned. With them went an American flag which flowed every Fourth of July from the housetop in a little city on the Rhine, an ancient town, once the seat of Emperors and made famous by Martin Luther.

And one day in 1870 something happened. Prussian troops were passing through into France and two officers were quartered in the Fuhrman house. That night Karl Fuhrman was born (eight minutes after his twin brother!) A sudden influx of four men, his father used to say.

When Old Glory went up on the following morning, one of the Prussians said: "This is no time for a foreign rag—put up a German flag or none!"

"That American flag has gone up there on every Fourth of July for over fifteen years and it shall stay," said Fuhrman, Sr.

Hot words followed, then a scuffle and when the mess at the foot of the stairs was untangled, Fuhrman Sr. had two broken fingers and was unfit for service in the army. But the flag remained until sundown.

In 1880 the mother died and in 1883 the father came back to America with the twins. A man of high mental attainments, a great lover of music, he became dean of the faculty of one of Buffalo's splendid high schools and founded the city's first high school orchestra. He was ten seasons 'cellist in the city's symphony orchestra. He died in 1908.

After a number of years in the "College of Hard Knocks" and two years in Columbia University, Karl came to San Francisco (in 1899) to take a position with the big music house, and a jolly young lot, he says, Fred, Phil and Andy were those days.

In 1912 he promoted his own business, but he admits that the best thing he has done during the twenty-four years he has been here was to become a member of the Bohemian Club.

The New Member: And this "Grove Book" of his—does the Club get it out?

The Old Member: Well, hardly; we do encourage art, but if we were to print all of our poets' effusions, we'd have to treble the dues.

The Musician: What do you think of it, Prof?

The Professor: Well, mostly froth. Nothing new that's good, and nothing good that's new. However "Armageddon" — monistic, evolutionary — with an exposition of man's dual nature shows some depth of thought and a cosmic vision.

The Musician: I hear some of his songs have been very successful. I liked several in last year's book, but most of them had already been published with music.

The Poet: Well, I can't say that I've been greatly stirred by any of it. No fault technically, but nothing big, nothing important, nothing compelling. Interesting in spots, perhaps; I might even say a little unique occasionally in the matter and manner, yet——

The Friend: But remember, George, he's a business man who, as an associate member is striving to do his bit.

The Musician: Yes, of course, and at that I think that "Kreisler Played" is damned good!

The BonVivant: Yes and I got a kick out of "Orgy" and "To Jacqueline" and that other one on the same page; and that thing about the crook's girl is a real bit of the underworld, well told. Of course, most of us fellows don't know anything about meter and form and all that stuff, but I like to read things I can get right off the bat without a dictionary.

The Friend: So do I. Now that simple thing about the little tree—reminds me of my "First Reader" in grammar school—but what can't a fellow read of life between the lines? What you take away all depends on what you bring with you. I think I got that last from you, Prof.

The Old Member: I spent a half hour over it and wasn't bored a bit, but he should have taken a pill instead of writing that lugubrious thing about death letting him in. Even if he "cast love off" he needn't wish himself dead about it—what?

The New Member: You don't suppose he really means all that?

The Professor: Well, you can't tell about these poets (near and real). Sometimes they expose a bit of their ego.

The Poet: So they do, Prof., for once you are right. By the way, those aphorisms have a foreign flavor. I imagine he got them from Nietzsche or another of that crazy German tribe.

The Member who quotes his Wife: Well, fellows, I was too busy at our little bar to look at the darn thing at the grove, but my wife found it among my soiled linen when I got home. She said the fellow who wrote those aphorisms about woman was pretty clever to crawl out to safety by way of their epilogue.

The Friend: Well, we all seem to have found something to talk about at least—ah, there's Fuhrman. I'll go over and tell him how you all raved about his book—s'long. (exit).

The New Member: Lean in here and listen, gentlemen (sotto voce business of imparting weighty information) step along and follow me.

(Exeunt all through the door east of the Cave Man).

(Curtain)

"ALICE"

She was a creature young and fair,
her eyes deep blue, and in her hair
the radiance of a golden morn
had lingered, longing to adorn
and crown such loveliness and grace.
While eager impulse flushed her face
She speaks as one who knows her will:
"I know dear friend, you have much skill
in making poems and I'm told
I have great talent and I've sold
a verse on "Spring" to Uncle Joe,
He owns the Daily News, you know.
For ev'ry word I know a rhyme
and I have endless loads of time,
I wrote class poems while at school,
of verses I know every rule.
I'll write—and all the world shall know,
like Tennyson or even Poe;
I need, perhaps, a hint or two
and so I thought I'd come to you."
What could I say, what could I do
for one who all and nothing knew;
for one whose calm, sweet, ordered life
had never known grief, pain or strife,
whom love and passion had not touched;
fear, hate and sorrow had not clutched.
Who had not wept hot, blinding tears,
nor known the stress of long, dark years?
What could I say to one who thought
the deepest tragedy was wrought
when Jack, her sweetheart, gave a glance
at dark-eyed Evelyn at the dance?
So I said, "Dearest, Uncle Joe
will buy your poems and, you know,
I've never sold one—why waste time
With me when you know how to rhyme?"

TO JACQUELINE

You fear eternal flame and sin you shun,
When I suggest one little hour of love,
Because no priestly word has made us one.

But recently the priest was reading mass
In Latin—and you could not understand—
But I have studied in a Latin class.

He said: "O pious Christians, this say I:
You surely shall for ev'ry unkissed kiss
One hundred years in hell's fierce fire fry!"

TO PLEASURE

Oh those who never raised the sparkling glass
At midnight's happy, care-free hour,
And whom no maid with dark, seductive eyes
Has tempted to some hidden bower;

Who ne'er forgot the old world's serious sham,
And feared its pleasures to explore,
How wise are they, how virtuous, and yet
No words can say how I abhor!

DEATH LET ME IN!

Death let me in! Death let me in!
Naught do I know of your awesome realm;
but 'tis my pray'r that there within
May dark oblivion all o'erwhelm.

What have I done to merit life?
Love I cast off with repelling hand;
dark are the years of useless strife;
Death, thou shalt listen and understand.

Overmuch have I known of grief
too great the burden of pain and tears;
Grant me thy cold hands' sweet relief,
ending the torture of empty years.

Let me no longer pleading stand,
Surely there can be no blacker sin:
Love I cast off with repelling hand;
Death let me in! Death let me in!

SALMAGUNDI

Of what avail is luck
to one who is a loon?
It might be raining soup,
he'd be without a spoon!

Friendship without sacrifice
is a thing I can't conceive;
if your friend thinks most of getting,
Cut the ties without regretting,
nor the loss of him bereave.

The true skeptic will finally doubt his doubts.

To lose one's ideals means never
to have had any.

A new truth will easily carry the day
until an old error appears in its way.

One may discredit corruption by
accepting too small a bribe!

True love is ideal
while marriage is real;
consider your weal:
don't take real for ideal.

Nothing is so indecent as
so-called morality.

An admirable man,
I know him well, I swear;
he beats his patient wife,
and then he combs her hair!

If I know what you find laughable,
I know you.

From the lofty heights of reason
life is but a dread disease;
and the world a sorry bedlam,
from whose clutch there's no release.

Whatever liberates our spirit without
giving mastery over ourselves is ruinous.

Whence? Whither? How?
the gods make no reply.
content be with Because
and do not ask them why.

Let us go from utility, through
truth, to beauty.

Your head alone shall never grasp
    a work of art
to feel its pow'r you needs must also
    give your heart.

Give us truth! the crowd is yelling,
timid poesy repelling.

ARMAGEDDON

All I am: from life's beginning,
Dormant in the ancient sea,
To the master of the planet,
Claiming Godly pedigree.

All the mystic, living forces
Move me with resistless surge;
Source and goal forever hidden,
Plaything of the cosmic urge.

Through laborious, countless eons
I have struggled from the soil,
Brother of the worm and eagle,
Child of Nature's endless toil.

In me blend the fear and cunning
Of the timid, hunted hare
With the tiger's savage courage
Stalking, hungry, from his lair.

I am vice and I am virtue,
I am love and I am hate,
I am kind and I am cruel,
I destroy and I create.

I am Brahma, I am Buddha
I am Moses, I am Christ;
I shall hang at dawn, a murderer,
Brooding, in a cell, despised!

I am tyrant over millions,
Pow'r of wealth my very God;
I'm an old and tattered beggar
Whom the pangs of hunger prod.

I kill pallid, little children.
In my mines and in my mills;
I am shocked and feel compassion
When my tread an earth-worm kills.

I am Alfred, I am Ivan,
I am just and I'm a knave;
I am Lincoln, I am Nero,
I set free and I enslave.

I face God at dawn, rejoicing,
On a sun-kissed, wind-swept hill;
Errant, in the slums at midnight,
I seek pangs of lust to still.

Thus am I that great Arena
Where a Saint and Demon fight;
One for dark and loathsome bondage,
One for liberty and light.

When, at last, the Victor rises
Bloody, dazed, but Victor still,
He shall prove my soul's Saint Michael,
My unconquerable will!

ADVICE

"I find it devlish hard
to write a poem, friend.
Where do you get the thoughts?
please some assistance lend."

On the walls, old Dear, and on the floor;
they teem with thoughts, or behind the door.
gaze at the wall and concentrate;
then shall the muse unlock the gate.
If still you find your efforts vain,
take my advice: try not again.
Grieve not that fate no answer brings;
God wills you should do other things.

TWO SONGS

TWO SEASONS

Gray are the skies o'er the wind-swept hill,
The snow-covered valley below lies still,
The chill brook is crawling neath icy sheen,
And stark branches quiver where leaves were green.
So, too, in my heart all is cold and drear
Since that bitter hour when you left me, Dear!

But neath the coverlet of the snow
The magical spring bids the violets grow,
And soon sunny skies and a balmy breeze
Shall shower with blossoms the fields and trees.
So, too, shall my heart be aglow with cheer
When you come again to be near me, Dear!

"IT IS FOR YOU"

It is for you that dawn awakes the flowers
Their sweetest fragrance to exhale;
It is for you the songbirds in the bowers
Sing songs of love on hill and vale;
And when the sun, in ardent splendor wooing,
In happy spring his promises renewing,
On all the fields the blossoms fair is strewing,
It is for you; it is for you!

It is for you that countless stars are gleaming
Within the vaulted, deep, blue skies;
It is for you that night comes with its dreaming,
When love sends longing winged on sighs;
And when the moon impelled by fond emotion,
Eager to prove his ardor and devotion
Transmutes to silver all the boundless ocean,
It is for you; it is for you!

THE ANARCHIST

Offer naught to quench my thirst
at the hour you take my life;
let me drink but once again
from the hot lips of my wife.

Tearless she will see me die,
see my blood sink in the sands;
and, believe, she'll never take
pity's bread from hangmen's hands.

And a son she soon will bear,
who for ev'ry tear she sheds
must—with dying lips I swear—
Mow your cursed children's heads!

THE BEST

Is your head and heart a-whirling?
Then, indeed, you know the best;
For if love no longer thrills you,
Nor with woe an error fills you,
You would best be laid to rest.

I KNOW THEM NOT

I wander through the city and a gray
Fog-veil drifts o'er the tow'ring piles of steel;
The crowd below impelled by some strange zeal,
And thousands pass: each bent on his own way.

I know them not—and locked within each breast,
Is there a fate resembling mine and bleeds
A wounded heart, perhaps, while no one heeds,
Each one absorbed in his own interest?

The cold fog drips and ever on we go;
From me to you no flash illumes the deep,
And though one called the word the wind would sweep
It on and none can of the other know.

ORGY

(Rondeau)

Let Venus reign this rapturous night,
And every veil of modesty be rent.
An hour ago, and you were prudish, quite:
Now in your breast a raging fire is pent.

Blush not for nudity: you should resent
That such a form was ever hid from light.
Venus shall reign this rapturous night
And every veil of modesty be rent.

First, drinking in your lines, I fed my sight,
Now passion's fury finds an eager vent:
And at our feet sits Cupid, happy sprite,
With useless bow, for every arrow's spent,
And Venus reigns this rapturous night.

THE DAY

Nights darkn'ning hour seems to say:
Have you used well this lovely day?

"Rosemary's lips I kissed at morn
Ere yet the rosy dawn was born.

Bravely I faced the daily care
And helped a soul in deep despair.

'Mid friends a happy hour I spent;
No ear to selfish wishes lent.

And from a realm with stars agleam
Comes last a happy poet-dream."

Night's dark'ning hour seems to say:
You have done well this lovely day.

To one who knows me
and yet loves me

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Karl Fuhrman

With the sincere wish that it may rekindle their love for Him whose birth we celebrate at this season, I am retelling and printing this little tale

for

My dear friends of the Bohemian Club

December, 1924

—KARL FUHRMAN.

THE STRANGER

(A tale of Russia)

The clay hut stands heavily oppressed, it seems, by an immense straw roof and that, in turn, is burdened with a large stork's nest.

An old woman stands motionless by the door. Very old, indeed, she is and very small, and her little body is all a-tremble in a smock of pale red. Her clear, blue eyes are anxiously watching a cossack who is saddling his horse.

The young man is small but stocky; his hair is black and smooth and his moustache long and bristly. His slit-eyes betray tartar descent. A strap girds his coarse coat and his trousers are tucked into high boots of red leather.

He pulls the straps with his teeth and again tests the saddle, the cushion with its colored border, the great, rolled coat, two large pack sacks and a field bottle. Slowly he puts the head gear, decorated with turquoises, on his horse. The whip and lassoo hang near the stirrup.

During all this the horse stands perfectly still. It is a Ukranian horse with spider legs and angular crupper. Its large, sleepy eyes and sluggish movements do not betray the strength, the courage, the endurance it possesses.

Marko Tinorka stops with downcast eyes. He is ready for the journey. The hetman has sent him an order: Marko is to replace a fallen comrade in the Regiment to which he was ascribed at birth.

The old woman, in the silent pain of a passive nature, cannot weep nor complain; her eyes follow every motion of the son. Beside her is crouched a young peasant woman with the high head ornament of the lately wedded; she is weeping; her head is buried in her apron and her nervous hands grasp her skirt.

Marko had married this sixteen-year-old girl two months ago. Now he goes—to be one among millions—not a being, but a thing, a Russian soldier. He knows that his wife, almost a child, from this day on is a widow. His absence will extend over long, long years. The young

woman will be exposed to dangerous and unnatural solitude and to the silent custom of the land which will consider and treat her as a wanton.

On the steppes the horse is the companion, the friend, the child of the house. It shares the destinies, labors and meals of the Ukranian family. Like the latter, it nourishes itself on ground maize and rye bread. It labors in the field and on the threshing floor. And it runs in the peasant races. Who knows—should the distance be over five miles—whether, with its long regular tempo of the prairie wolf, it would not run the lungs and life out of the full blooded English horses? Yearly, at Christmas time, it goes abroad. The sleigh follows, in a long train, hundreds of other light sleighs. The caravans bring salted fish, smoked pork, maize and oats to the far cities; all products of the Caspian Sea and the blessed steppes. It is a singularly stirring spectacle; these silent rows ever moving in the same narrow track which has been made by hundreds of horses in an even regular step, moved by an inner rhythm. The men, white with frost; their tall fur caps tower like protecting roofs above their brows. Thus they journey silently as in a dream, smoking their short pipes. Now and again their monotonous songs are heard. In the falling night, in the silence of a colorless solitude moves the horde of horses, sleighs and men. Their outlines grow in the mist of the fogs — a spectral procession; the incarnation of generations who glide slowly and indifferently through the ages. The visioning, suffering and passionate soul of these peoples is indifferent; it awakens only in three realities; in war, in work, in love.

After a moment Marko walks over toward his mother, prostrates himself before her and touches the ground with his brow. The old woman lays her hands upon his head with a biblical gesture. Tears stream over her wrinkled face and in her eyes is the terror of the dying.

With a shrill shriek the young woman has thrown herself upon her husband. She clings to him in desperation, screaming with baffled love and utter hopelessness.

Marko pushes her from him, leaps upon his horse and gallops away. In the eyes of the weeping women he appears a great phantastic bird that soars westward with wings outspread.

* * *

Marko Tinorka's regimental life was that of all other sons of the Ukraine; an incomparably proud regiment "twice his horses laved their bleeding breasts in the Seine."

Tinorka soon learned his trade. The regiment was stationed in St. Petersburg, the city on malodorous morasses—pink granite and marble set upon the mud of the Asiatic village.

Then he came to Moscow. He saw the old city in the imperial ornamentation of its glittering Kremlin.

Moscow that was rejected by the Czar in favor of another court, Moscow—with fifty golden copulas, its slender Minaret—like bell towers and colored churches—a bed of flowers in the ice.

And Tinorka reached the dead and murderous white sea where disconsolate Northerners feed an eternal subterranean fire in underground caves. Tinorka passed through the blossoming strength of the South by the Black Sea—the realm of light, of tall and graceful men and lovable and loving women. The slavonic world is endless.

Marko and his horse fought in the campaign against Turkey. History knows their deeds; more than once they covered over thirty miles during a night to fight all the following day.

Then he was wounded. His arm was amputated. Now, then, Tinorka, enough! Now, go home!

Years had passed since that evening when the Cossack had left his home land. Years were blotted out of his life. He rode in short daily journeys; his horse had gone lame, its knees were bent and the breath rattled in its throat. With lowered head it trotted over the dusty roads of the Bessarabian steppes.

At last, one day, under a burning sun he saw the great stork's nest on the paternal roof. The village lay like a green bouquet amid yellow fields of rye. A peculiar odor struck the nostrils of the old race horse, the odor of burnt straw that permeates Little Russia. The horse lifted its head, pricked up its ears and with quicker steps made for the barn where it had begun life.

The door of the hut was closed, also the windows.

Marko dismounted. Not for a moment did he expect to find mother or wife; not the tiniest spark of hope. One thus torn out of his home soil, buffeted by life and

fate, wrecked, old and beaten, does not expect more than an empty hut; he is incapable of the wish even to start anew; he is a Robinson Crusoe on the desert isle of life.

Marko attempted to move the rusty bolt when he heard a slight noise; the hedge stirred, the branches were parted and with astonishment he saw his mother rising laboriously and approach the stranger with the tiny steps of a child. He was shocked when he saw the starved figure, and the colorless, tortured features.

The meeting was so wholly unexpected that a feeling akin to pain swept over him on seeing her. There she was —and yet he scarcely recognized her. She appeared to him a vision inspiring fear; only her eyes were clear and penetrating as of yore. She came close to him and an unintelligible murmuring escaped her lips.

"Mother," said Marko, "where is my wife?"

She shook her head, as though saying: You surely know.

Marko put no further questions. He led the horse to the stable, and the horse neighed hoarsely at the threshhold which he had so often crossed. In the hut the mother gave the son sour cabbage and rye bread for supper.

The days dragged by wearily. Marko resumed his peasant life; his old horse pulled the plow and the harrow. In the Spring the field was green with young oats, but the Cossack grew weaker from month to month. He wasted away and his face was sunken and colorless. The amputation, done in the stress and haste of war, had touched vital parts.

He felt this but the peasant suffers silently; he spoke to no one. The terrors of gradual dissolution robbed him of sleep and hunger; he grew weary of breathing. One night his mother heard him rise and stagger out of the hut. He moved with heavy and uncertain steps. She heard the creaking of the stable door. Fear and apprehension clutched her heart and she laid for hours on her bed, trembling and terrified.

At last day dawned. She arose and went into the stable. The door was open and swung in the wind. The son was lying near the horse, breathing no more.

Marko's face appeared younger; the trace of a smile was on his lips. He had gone without fear, without a struggle.

The Cossack and his mother had neither relatives nor friends in the village and the poor, lone woman was in despair. When evening came she sank to the floor of the hut in a mute prayer of utter hopelessness.

A gentle knock came on the door. She arose slowly and puzzled, and, opening the door, faced a stranger. He was dressed in a long dark coat of coarse material held with a belt at the waist. His bearded face was pale and delicate, but his large brown eyes were full of tenderness and sympathy.

In a voice of singular warmth and kindliness he said, "Thou needest help and art in despair, but I shall aid thee."

The mother lighted a lantern, bade him follow, and led the stranger to the stable. He remained there and far into the night she heard the stranger at work with saw and hammer.

At dawn she was awakened by his knock and the two brought the son into the hut in a coffin which the stranger had fashioned.

"The tools are old and rusty," she said, "and lumber scarce, I hardly can understand—

"I did the best I could with the material at hand." And while the shadow of a smile passed over his fine features, he added, "I am a carpenter," and was gone.

It is the day before Christmas. An hour after the mysterious stranger's sudden departure the mother drags the coffin out through the door while the snow is blown in by a gust of icy wind. She pauses and with her sleeve wipes sweat and tears from her face.

Then she puts the old, worn out harness on Marko's horse and hitches him to the sleigh. Suddenly the horse sees the long coffin and raises his ears. The odor of death, as he had often scented it on the fields of battle, enters his nostrils. The mother's grey hair is blown about by the wind while she drags the coffin to the sleigh.

As the coffin falls upon it the horse startles; his thick veins swell and his red eyes are dilated. The mother bolts the door, wraps her head and shoulders in an old ragged shawl and takes up the lines. The old horse seems scarcely able to get into motion. The church is twelve miles away.

It soon becomes apparent that all is not well with the horse; his breath comes in short loud gasps and only the constant urge of the woman keeps him going at all. Once or twice his trembling legs have given away and he rises with great difficulty. After an hour of this terrible struggle he falls heavily to rise no more.

After a futile attempt to untangle the harness the old woman looks about for help, but there is only the bleak, white steppe; endless, cold and solitary.

Utterly despairing she staggers back to the sleigh and sinks upon the coffin, burying her head in her hands. How well off is he—removed forever from all pain and struggle!

She feels a light touch upon her shoulder and the pale and gentle face of the stranger looks down upon her. Too deeply moved for words she sinks into the snow at his feet. He gently raises her and bids her sit in the sleigh. Then he takes the harness from the horse and stepping between the shafts proceeds on the journey. It is difficult going and often he rests, but finally the tower of the church is visible and as the shadows of evening begin to shroud the landscape the strange little group reach the foot of the well-worn stairs that lead to the portals of the church.

A boy is tolling the bell and the priest approaches from his house nearby. He is attracted by the unusual sight before him and he turns toward the group. He is about to speak, but stands rooted to the ground a few feet away from the stranger and looks quickly from the latter's pierced and bleeding hands to his pale, sorrowful face.

The stranger puts his finger to his lips and points silently to the mother who cowers by the coffin, her head resting upon it.

The priest, overcome with awe, stoops to kiss the stranger's feet but the latter has vanished.

The mother rises and holds out a trembling hand with a few Kopeks to the priest.

"No!" shouts the priest, his voice trembling with agitation, "the Son of God himself has brought thee and thy dead! See, His very blood is there frozen upon the harness! and I saw Him! I saw Him! What a Christmas!

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